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SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-first year

Letter dated 6 June 1996 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i.
of the Permanent Mission of Turkey to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 5 June 1996, addressed to you by His Excellency Mr. Osman Ertuğ, representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (see annex).

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex would be circulated as a document of the fiftieth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 55, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Tuluy TANÇ
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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ANNEX

Letter dated 5 June 1996 from Mr. Osman Ertuğ
addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to bring to your attention the true facts concerning the border incident that took place on 3 June 1996 in Lefkoşa (Nicosia), involving the shooting of a Greek Cypriot National Guard soldier, and to deplore the reckless exploitation of this unfortunate incident by the Greek Cypriot side in a letter dated 3 June 1996 addressed to you by the Greek Cypriot representative at the United Nations (A/50/969-S/1996/404 dated 4 June 1996).

The incident took place in the Köşklüçiftlik area of Lefkoşa, to the south-west of the British High Commission, at 0630 hours local time, when a Greek Cypriot National Guard soldier, in full battle gear, violated the buffer zone and, by using a bridge and a road which only personnel of the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) are allowed to use, crossed into Turkish Cypriot territory.

The soldier was verbally warned by our sentries in the area in accordance with the standard procedures and internationally accepted rules of engagement. As he ignored the verbal warnings and continued to advance, the soldiers on patrol duty who had come to the area fired warning shots in the air and into the ground in order to make him stop and turn back.

As he continued his advance in spite of the repeated warnings, he was fired upon, but only as a last resort in order to stop him. He was then seen throwing himself on the ground and disappearing into the bushes in the area.

An UNFICYP soldier on duty at observation post UN-60, who had heard the shots came to the area and, in view of the seriousness of the situation, was told to come with his commanding officer. When the local UNFICYP Commander arrived at the scene at 0655 hours local time, he was taken to the exact location of the incident after a brief discussion. As it was observed that the Greek Cypriot soldier had been wounded, he was taken to hospital in a United Nations ambulance immediately.

The investigations carried out in the area have revealed that,

(a) The incident took place in territory of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and not in the buffer zone;

(b) The Greek Cypriot soldier in question was fully warned both verbally and by firing into the air and the ground;

(c) Although he was not at first seen carrying a rifle, since he was in full military gear, he was thought to be carrying grenades, explosives or a handgun and, therefore, posing a threat to the Turkish Cypriot personnel.

It will be seen that the information contained in the Greek Cypriot representative's aforementioned letter is deliberately wrong and is designed to mislead the world public opinion by exploiting such an unfortunate incident. The attempt to lay the responsibility for the incident on Turkey, while no Turkish soldier was involved in the incident, shows the intent behind this shameless propaganda and the extent to which the Greek Cypriot side will go in its vilification campaign.

We protest and deplore this attitude of the Greek Cypriot side and express the hope that those concerned will take the necessary measures so that such incidents do not recur.

I shall be grateful if this letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 55, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Osman ERTUĞ
Representative
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus